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English at Evanston Township High School

A Departmental Report Compiled Under the Direction of WILLIAM R. WOOD,
Chairman of the English Department

This report has been prepared through the cooperative efforts of thirty or more Evanston Township High School English teachers, every member of the staff assuming responsibility for one or more sections. The major task of coordinating the various commentaries has been done by Miss Dorothy J. Colburn, who gave unstintingly of her time and energy to the completion of the work.

In presenting this report, the intent has been to describe current practices as they have grown out of past experiences in the teaching of English at Evanston. The staff recognizes fully the need for continuous study of the old problems that are always with us and of the new problems that are constantly arising. It is hoped that through the work of the Reappraisal Study Committees, and through individual contributions of teachers, better materials and better methods of instruction in English may be developed. The staff is particularly interested in working out a "vertical" schedule of instruction in reading, speaking, listening, and writing skills that will eliminate dull and unnecessary repetition of the same basic principles year after year and, at the same

EDITOR'S NOTE: In granting permission to reprint this report, Principal Francis L. Bacon and Dr. William R. Wood have asked me to relay the following observations:

1. We are not eager to encourage anyone into thinking that our work in English at Evanston is the "last word." We don't even agree among ourselves on some of our procedures, and there is frequent disagreement over the selection of materials.

2. The report is simply a description of what we are now doing. By next year we shall undoubtedly have made a number of changes.

time, provide for a steadily unfolding pattern of growth in the effective use of language, extending from the elementary grades, through high school, college, and into adulthood.

The scope and the variety of work attempted by the modern English department is greater, perhaps, than that of any other subject matter field. It is concerned equally with the development of desirable attitudes and basic study techniques, with the understanding of fundamental ideas and the improvement of the primary skills of communication, with corrective speech and remedial reading, as well as with special interest and honors courses. English studies offer the best opportunity in the ordinary secondary school curriculum for a youth to develop a sound, useful philosophy of living under the guidance of the great thinkers and great teachers that make up the pages of literature.

Departmental Organization and Policies

Class Size and Pupil Load. — Although the policy of the school is to maintain an average of thirty pupils to an English class, there are occasional variations in either direction. As far as possible, Opportunity, Special Interest, and Honors classes have fewer pupils in order to permit more individual instruction. In an eight-period day the average teacher instructs five classes and carries one study hall assignment, but a teacher carrying a major out-of-class duty such as supervision of dramatic productions, the *Yearbook*, the *Evanstonian*, or athletics, has a suitable reduction in teaching load.

Rotation of Assignments. — Five years ago the department introduced a system of rotation of assignments. By this plan a typical teacher has a major assignment of three classes in his special field, for example, first year English, which he retains for six consecutive years, and a minor assignment of two classes. This minor assignment changes at the end of every two years until the teacher has taught each of the four years of high school English. At the end of six years a teacher may choose to repeat his major assignment for another span of six years or he may select a new field of specialization. Thus all teachers become familiar with the entire four-year curricular pattern and have an equal opportunity to work with both the younger and the older pupils.

Executive Committee. — Business and professional matters arising in the department are first presented to the Executive Committee, composed of the chairman and six members. Four of

these are elected by ballot by the department members, and two are appointed by the superintendent of the school and the chairman. To assist the chairman in carrying out necessary details one of the members of the Executive Committee is designated as Secretary of the English Department. Matters of policy, plans for revision of courses, selection of new texts, projects to be attempted are here worked into proposals to be offered to the entire department for approval or rejection. Meeting twice a month, this committee can prepare procedures and policies for presentation with greater efficiency of time and effort than would be possible if such matters were initiated in departmental meetings and were discussed by the entire staff of thirty or more members.

In close association with this Executive Committee are the particular teachers of each year of English, who automatically form a standing committee for that year and who aim continuously to improve the curriculum and the classroom procedures in their year of specialization.

Reappraisal Committees. — Just as these preceding committees work in parallel relationship through the four years, the department has six others, the Reappraisal Committees, planning a progressive vertical development in the following areas: Basic Study Skills (including mechanics), Reading, Oral Expression, Listening, Written Expression, and Fundamental Attitudes and Ideals. Because of their objectives these committees are naturally the connecting links with the junior high schools on the lower level and the Community College on the upper. Thus, they have a necessary, double function. They not only keep each area of work developing progressively through the eight-year period of junior high, high school, and junior college, but they serve as a permanent reappraisal body, ever alert to improve curricular content within their areas.

Articulation with Intermediate Schools. — To promote better articulation between the work of the high school and that of the elementary and intermediate schools in English, a representative committee of administrators, specialists, and classroom teachers has been meeting regularly to study ways of developing greater uniformity in aims and methods. Discussions during the year just past centered upon the teaching of mechanics. Much progress in articulation has been made. A beginning has also been made in the study of reading. It is planned to continue these meetings for two or three years, or until satisfactory articulation has been established in English from the first grade through the fourteenth.

1 ENGLISH

Texts purchased by pupils during the first semester:

- Chapman's *Gaining Language Skills* (Harcourt, Brace and Company)
 A dictionary suitable for all four years of high school use. It may be chosen from the following recommended list:
 Funk and Wagnall's *Standard High School Dictionary* (Row, Peterson and Company)
 Macmillan's *Modern Dictionary* (The Macmillan Company)
 Thorndike *Century Senior Dictionary* (Scott, Foresman and Company)
 Webster's *Collegiate Dictionary. Fifth Edition* (G. and C. Merriam Company)
 Winston's *Simplified Dictionary, Advanced or Encyclopedic Edition* (John C. Winston Company)
 Bacon and Kirkpatrick's *Shakespeare's Six Most Popular Plays* (Row, Peterson and Company) NOTE: This book is used in all four years of English.

Texts purchased by pupils during second semester:

- Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities* (L. W. Singer Company)

Sets circulated from the Central Book Room during the year:**Assigned:**

- Williams, *New Narratives* (D. Appleton-Century Company)
 Arliss, *Up the Years from Bloomsbury* (Blue Ribbon Books) or
Autobiography of Lincoln Steffens (Harcourt, Brace and Company)

Optional:

- Cohen, *More One-Act Plays* (Harcourt, Brace and Company)
 Wood and Husband, *Short Stories as You Like Them* (Harcourt, Brace and Company)
 Gordon and King, *A Magic World* (D. Appleton-Century Company)
 Untermeyer, *Stars to Steer By* (Harcourt, Brace and Company)
 Untermeyer, *Yesterday and Today* (Harcourt, Brace and Company)

Knowing the School. — The first aim of the course in freshman English is to make the pupil feel at home in Evanston Township High School and to help him to get the right start in his high school career. With the aid of the *Pilot*, student handbook, and through class discussions, the newcomer soon becomes familiar with the regulations, the organizations, and the traditions of the school. He is encouraged to ask questions, to explore the building, to take pride in his school, and to choose some activity in which he wishes to participate. Early in the year he writes about his old school, about his impressions of his new school, and about his family and his personal interests. The

teacher usually keeps a record of pertinent data which he gradually accumulates about each pupil.

Study Habits. — The teacher of freshmen takes special care to make sure that the daily assignments are fully understood and are written down by each pupil. The purpose of the next day's lesson is explained, the directions are read aloud and discussed, and a start is made in carrying them out. Requirements as to acceptable form in written work are explained and repeated frequently at the beginning of the year and insisted upon thereafter. Gradually pupils with poor habits of study are helped in planning a daily schedule, in making sure that all necessary tools and books are at hand, and in developing habits of concentration and thoroughness. They are encouraged to seek the teacher's help before or after school. If a pupil is found to be unable to do the class work, he is recommended for transfer to the *opportunity course*.

Library Week. — During the first six weeks of the school year each freshman English class spends a week in the library, under the guidance of the teacher and the librarians. Each day during this library week the pupil is given a mimeographed assignment, such as making a floor plan of the library, locating the various classes of books and other materials, and using the card catalog, the reference books, and the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature*. He also learns the parts of a book, the proper care of books, and the regulations governing the use of library books and of the reference books in the home room. He now feels that he knows what to do in the library and that he is welcome there. He is urged also to own and use a Public Library card and to seek help, when necessary, from the high-school assistant at the main Evanston library. At the end of the library week he goes to the open shelves and selects a book with which to begin his outside reading.

Outside Reading. — In general, the pupil has free choice in his outside reading, within the requirements of good taste. Pupils are encouraged not to read below their level of ability and are not allowed to neglect reading entirely. Both the teacher and the librarians suggest books, and there are annotated lists of good reading matter at the library desk. Most teachers require the outside reading of two (or more) books during each six-week period, with brief reports, either oral or written. The pupil is encouraged to read various types of literature to keep his recreational reading stimulating and well balanced. In order to insure use of the information gained during library week, occasional

assignments are made which take the pupil to the library for a definite purpose other than recreational reading.

Reading Skills. — The work in reading skills is designed to train the pupil to suit his rate and style of reading to the material to be read. He is shown when to skim and when to read closely. He is taught to seize upon topic sentences and key words. There is some oral reading, principally of poetry and of Shakespeare. In this reading, attention is given to correct phrasing and rhythm and to the development of a pleasing voice. Although pupils are encouraged to increase their rate of reading, appreciation of what is being read is always the prime consideration. Pupils are shown that the ability to read well is basic for success in most school subjects and in life.

Dictionary. — Each pupil is required to own and use a high-school dictionary. He is shown the necessity of proof-reading his own written work. Through the use of pamphlets containing exercises he receives practice in using the dictionary intelligently.

Vocabulary Building. — The teacher makes every effort to arouse an interest in vocabulary building. Whatever the lesson, there are always opportunities to develop an interest in words. A pupil with a limited vocabulary is praised for the correct use of a new word or for bringing in a newspaper clipping containing a word discussed the day before. Though a pupil's reading vocabulary will always exceed his speaking vocabulary, it is not assumed that the pupil "knows" a word until he can pronounce it, spell it, and use it. This work in vocabulary building and dictionary study is designed to lay the foundation for some understanding of the history of the English language and a respect for its power, flexibility, and exactness.

Oral composition. — In oral composition, the emphasis is upon informality and upon getting the pupil to forget his shyness in a lively class discussion. Corrections are held to a minimum and are usually general rather than personal. Class chairmen try to get a response from every member of the class and to prevent a few aggressive pupils from dominating the discussion.

The work in oral composition varies according to the preference of the class and of the teacher, but it often includes such activities as sharing a personal experience, making an announcement, delivering a message, answering the telephone, demonstrating how to do or make something, presiding at a meeting, making a motion, choosing officers, making a candidate's speech, introducing a guest speaker, acting as toastmaster, or imitating a broadcast. Occasionally, several pupils combine their talents in a

program or in a dramatization of a scene from the literature being studied in class.

There is constant effort to improve recitations by eliminating "oral crutches," by improving enunciation, by training pupils to speak loudly enough to be heard easily, and by encouraging them to use complete sentences. Any speech defects that are noted are referred to the teachers of corrective speech.

Mechanics. — The instruction in grammar, punctuation, and spelling is intended to be functional and is constantly correlated with the work in literature and with oral and written expression. The work in grammar includes a thorough study of the parts of speech and an emphasis on correct usage, with much oral practice. The work is kept simple and basic, finer points of grammar being left for later years. Punctuation is taught in its relation to grammar and as a means of clarifying thought. In spelling the emphasis is upon individual errors and their correction. Throughout the work in mechanics, the teacher stresses the fact that a knowledge of correct form is necessary before a person can express his thoughts clearly and freely.

Written Expression. — In written composition the chief emphasis at the beginning of the year is upon close observation and upon the sharing of experiences. Themes are kept short. Content and correctness of form are stressed equally. A simple outline of two or three items aids in paragraphing. The pupil is encouraged to write honestly and simply. He is urged to strive to create one definite impression in the reader's mind. He learns to use sense impressions and concrete details and to search for vivid and vigorous words and comparisons. Later in the year he writes sentence descriptions. This may lead to the writing of bits of free verse by the more gifted pupils. There is also an opportunity for the kind of writing in which the pupil expresses an opinion and tries to defend it logically.

When corrected themes are returned to the pupils, the teacher usually comments in class upon three or four faults common to all. Neatness, legibility, and correct spelling are required. There are often individual conferences outside of class. Frequently, for weaker pupils, marks on themes are withheld until the papers have been revised and brought up to standard. Many teachers have pupils keep a file of their themes.

Letters and Minutes. — In addition to the creative type of composition, there is practice in writing letters and in keeping the minutes of a meeting. Both friendly and business letters are studied and written. In the friendly letter the pupil learns to con-

sider the interests of the recipient. Since the end of the war, many pupils have begun correspondence with students abroad. In the study of the business letter, correct form is stressed and examples of good letters are brought in by pupils. In so far as possible, only letters which are to be actually sent are written.

Literature. — The literature studied in class is intended to be a little above the level of that read outside — material of good literary quality, in the reading of which the pupil will benefit by a teacher's guidance. There is an attempt to develop a sequence of materials throughout the year, but the necessity of scheduling sets of books from the Book Room interferes to some extent, particularly for the mid-year pupils.

Short Story. — The first type of literature studied is the short story. Emphasis is upon stories dealing with home and school life; with parent-child relationships; with animals, sports, and the sea; and with the difficulties of immigrants. Some of the stories in the text are assigned for rapid reading and some used for intensive study. Study is chiefly of the problem or conflict, the hints of character and motivation, the signs of emotion, and the humor and pathos in the stories. Study of the stories in the textbook precedes additional reading of short stories from the library.

Poetry. — Three sets of poetry anthologies are available for freshmen. The purpose of this unit is to foster a love of poetry rather than to develop analytical power. There is considerable freedom of choice for pupils. The pupil learns to read aloud and interpret simple poems. He gains some idea of the subject matter of poetry and of basic patterns and rhythms. Narrative poems are given prominence in this study.

The Merchant of Venice. — In the study of Shakespeare the aim is enjoyment without drudgery. Much help in interpretation is given at first; this is gradually withdrawn. Pupils learn how character is portrayed upon the stage through action and speech. They listen to the Orson Welles records, while following the accompanying text. They learn something of Shakespeare's life and of the Elizabethan theater. Sometimes pupils choose to build a model of the Globe Theater. Simple research is done on life and manners in Elizabethan times. Sometimes pupils exhibit on the bulletin board drawings or water colors expressing their conceptions of scenes and characters.

Biography. — The study of biography begins with class study of *Up the Years from Bloomsbury*. In addition to the humor, charm, and literary quality of the book, it formerly offered an excellent opportunity for correlation with motion pictures. Since

the death of George Arliss a replacement for this autobiography has been sought. The study of a common biography under the teacher's guidance precedes extensive reading of biographies in the library. Here pupils are free to follow their own choice, and many show a strong vocational interest.

Novel: A Tale of Two Cities.—In this novel the pupil learns to follow the development of character over a long period and to enjoy a complicated plot with several characters. From this book the pupil often develops a keen interest in Dickens and in the French Revolution. Again the exceptional pupil has an opportunity to make maps, drawings, models, and costume sketches, as well as to do additional reading in the library and make reports to the class.

Bulletin Board.—Throughout the year the classroom bulletin board exhibits illustrative material and items of current interest. Pupils are encouraged to discuss the best radio programs and motion pictures. Special events such as the Stock Show, the Flower Show, and special exhibits at the Art Institute are brought to their attention. Before vacations they are reminded of extra credit to be given for voluntary reports on visits to museums.

2 ENGLISH

Texts purchased by pupils during the first semester:

Chapman, *Using Language Skills* (Harcourt, Brace and Company)

Untermeyer, Ward, and Stauffer, *Doorways to Poetry* (Harcourt, Brace and Company)

NOTE: Bacon and Kirkpatrick's *Shakespeare's Six Most Popular Plays* is used in all four years.

NOTE: No additional books are purchased by the pupils during the second semester of the sophomore year.

Sets circulated from the Central Book Room during the year:

Assigned:

Lucas and Ansorge, *Prose and Poetry of Today—Regional America* (L. W. Singer and Company)

Modern Novels and Novelettes (various titles)

O'Rourke, *Self-Aids* (Educational and Personnel Publishing Company)

Optional:

Cohen, *One-Act Plays* (Harcourt, Brace and Company)

Cook, Miller and Loban, *Adventures in Appreciation*, Revised Edition (Harcourt, Brace and Company)

Eaton, *Short Stories for Study and Enjoyment* (Doubleday-Doran and Company)

Modern Plays (various titles)

Sabin, *Classical Myths That Live Today* (Silver, Brudett and Company)

Sedgwick and Dominovich, *Novel and Story* (Little, Brown and Company)

Stewart E. White, *The Long Rifle* (Sun Dial Press)

Witham, *Essays of Today* (Houghton Mifflin Company)

Wood, Bacon, Cameron, *Just for Sport* (J. B. Lippincott and Company)

Purposes of the Study of Literature. — The sophomore year is a truly significant one in the pupil's development. Heretofore the student has been concerned mainly with the action in what he has read; at this level he begins to become keenly interested in the people in the story — not only in what they do, but also in why they do it. The primary objective, then, is to help the pupil to understand ideas, himself, and other people better. When he can understand the speech and action of people in books and the reasons for the speech and action, he can see himself and others with greater understanding.

The secondary aim is to show the pupil certain literary techniques and devices that will help him to understand, and therefore to appreciate, ways in which skillful writers produce their effects.

Short Story. — Three weeks of the first semester are given to study of the short story. The text used in the classroom is supplemented by other collections in the library and by stories in current magazines. The student is encouraged to read for enjoyment and for information. He learns to interpret the theme or dominating idea which the author consciously or unconsciously puts into the story. Interchange of ideas is fostered; often the discussions concern problems that the stories present and that the pupil will probably meet and need to solve. The pupil learns a bit about the authors and is induced to further his knowledge of those whose stories particularly appeal to him. He is stimulated to attempt writing a short story of his own. Emphasis is also placed on improvement in reading habits and on vocabulary study.

Poetry. — Approximately eight days of the first semester and twelve of the second semester are devoted to the study of poetry. The main objective is that poetry gives pleasure. Because poetry, like music and painting, contributes most to the one who understands something of the basis of the art, the sophomore year has seemed opportune for introducing the pupil to the make-up of poetry. The student becomes acquainted with the nature of poetry, including imagery, rhythm, music, and figures of speech, and the distinctions between poetry and prose. He is helped in an understanding of its diction, the various kinds and patterns, and the underlying thoughts, moods, and emotions. As soon as he realizes

that poetry is not an artificial language, but rather a very vivid form of communication, he is encouraged to give utterance in verse to his own ideas. Other aims are to stimulate the imagination, to develop a sense of humor, to aid him in recreating the experience in a poem, to help him to see new beauty and truths in the world about him, and to create the desire to share verse with others and to memorize verses that have special significance for him.

Julius Caesar. — In the second semester three weeks are given to the study of *Julius Caesar*. The study of the play is enriched by the victrola records of Orson Welles and Roger Hill. The primary objective, to gain genuine enjoyment and understanding of the play, cannot be accomplished unless the play is brought to life for the pupil. He is helped to see, to hear, and to feel the interests of living people. From the play and the discussion he gains a clearer knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of human beings and of their psychological reactions to certain situations. He is made aware also of comparable present-day problems.

Novel. — Each class has access for three weeks to sets of assorted modern novels, biographies, and autobiographies. Wide variety in content and in style assures pleasant reading for every pupil, whatever his literary taste. The twofold purpose of this unit of work is to help the pupil to a more extensive enjoyment in reading and in sharing the books he reads, and to introduce him to books and authors worth reading. Use of these books is part of the basic second-semester course for all 2 English classes.

Prose and Poetry of Today. — *Regional America*, a set assigned for circulation in the second semester, serves to develop an understanding of America, its land and its people, through acquaintance with literary materials that reflect the customs, folklore, and physical characteristics of various sections of the country.

Optional Sets. — According to the interests and abilities of the class, the teacher may draw upon several optional sets: classical myths to give the pupil some knowledge of the beginnings of literature and provide background for pleasurable recognition of mythical allusions; a collection to introduce the essay as a form of reading which acquaints the pupil with the problems about him and to teach him the differences in construction of editorials, biographical sketches, and familiar essays.

Other optional sets which enable the teacher to adapt the work to the special interests of particular classes are *Just for Sport* by Wood, Bacon, and Cameron, a collection of sport stories,

and Sedgwick and Dominovich's *Novel and Story*, which includes besides short stories the novelette *Good-Bye, Mr. Chips*, and the popular novel *Mutiny on the Bounty*.

Composition and Mechanics. — Language usage and composition are taught in every unit during the year. Five weeks in the first semester and three in the second are devoted solely to that purpose. At this age level, when the student is forming many ideas and opinions of his own, it is relatively easy to make him conscious of the need for intelligent use of his language. He is trained to regard language as his tool for communication and to recognize that he must become skilled in its use if he wishes to express his ideas effectively and to comprehend the thoughts of others. One's expression of thought can be only as meaningful as the language he employs. When the pupil sees that ignorance of his language is a very real restriction for him, he begins to be more curious about the practical skills of expression. With some of these skills, of course, he is already familiar, but he needs strengthening in them.

Grammar. — The student is taught the functions of words and the ways in which words are combined into sentences to give the desired meaning. If he is to understand sentence relationships, he must know the names commonly used to describe the parts of a sentence. This work on sentence building includes, insofar as they serve a useful purpose, the parts of speech, subjects, predicates, phrases, and clauses. To understand further the way the parts of language cooperate to say precisely what one means, he is taught the kinds of sentences and how they are used.

He also learns the rules of capitalization and punctuation that will be of definite assistance to him.

After he has been taught the reasons for certain rules of usage, he is helped through practice to establish habits of correct usage. When he understands the logic of the rules, he is able to write and to speak with greater assurance and independence.

In order that he may express his ideas forcefully as well as accurately and clearly, he is taught the value of subordinating the less important ideas and the ways of securing variety. Much emphasis is placed on improvement in spelling and pronunciation and on promoting the habit of seeking the aid of various sources in solving language problems.

Composition. — Composition, written and oral, is taught in both semesters. Written composition stresses precision of speech — the art of saying exactly what is meant. The emphasis is always on helping the pupil to express his ideas and opinions logically

and easily. *Scholastic* and other magazines publishing the writing of high school students make the pupil conscious of his own possible abilities and eager to share his experiences with others of his age group. Through the writings of professional authors and of his classmates, he is taught the values of the power of suggestion, of conciseness, and of the use of specific detail for illustration and proof. Special remedial work in sentence structure and punctuation is the natural accompaniment of composition, most teachers fitting the technical work to the needs of the individual classes.

Letter writing, which is a special unit in the second-year course, emphasizes correct form in letters, and organization and desirable content in various types of correspondence. Many teachers have used as motivation the Red Cross letter-writing project, in which pupils in their classes correspond with young people from any one of the fourteen foreign countries included in the project.

Précis writing teaches precision in the understanding of other people's ideas, and brevity and accuracy in the restatement of those ideas, as well as discrimination in weighing the relative importance of the points made by the author.

The skills of reading and writing, of course, complement each other, and the furthering of one of these skills may well contribute to improvement in the other.

One piece of written work each week, not necessarily a theme, is the minimum requirement in 2 English, but most teachers ask for more than this minimum. Accent is always on the pupil's own experiences and current needs, with work organized under such general divisions as: Understanding Social Relations; Following Social Customs Intelligently; Developing Ideas in Paragraphs; Outlining; Writing for Enjoyment; Thinking Clearly; Forming Opinions through Discussion and Argument; and, Doing Business by Letter.

Oral Composition. — Oral composition, in the form of book reports, newspaper and magazine reports, and accounts of personal experiences, trains the pupil to speak clearly and distinctly, to contribute pertinently to group discussion, to speak and be understood. Appreciation of the opinions of other people and enjoyment of participation are valuable outgrowths of group discussion.

Vocabulary. — Spelling and word study are the natural accompaniments of composition. The chief objective is to enlarge the pupil's vocabulary so that he may understand more clearly

what he reads and say more precisely what he means. All teachers use specially prepared spelling lists with all classes. Many teachers have their pupils keep individual spelling lists, and most teachers include a dictionary unit designed for study of derivation and meaning of words and accuracy in their usage. Most pupils today realize that a wide knowledge of words is an essential part of preparation for successful living.

3 ENGLISH

Texts purchased by pupils during the first semester:

Campbell and Thomas, *Reading American Literature* (Little, Brown and Company)

Books for You (National Council of Teachers of English)

George Eliot, *Silas Marner* (Ginn and Company)

Leonard and Salisbury, *Considering the Meaning* (Scott, Foresman Company)

3 English D pupils used Wood, Carpenter and Colburn, *The Right Way With Words*, Book 5, Henry Holt and Company in place of *Considering the Meaning*.

3 English J pupils used Gray, *English for Life*, Book 4, J. B. Lippincott and Company, in place of *Considering the Meaning*.

NOTE: No additional books are purchased by pupils during the second semester of the junior year.

Texts available for circulation in sets from the Book Room:

Assigned:

Benet, *John Brown's Body* (Doubleday-Doran and Company)

Optional:

Adams, *Epic of America* (Blue Ribbon Books)

Fast, *The Last Frontier* (Reader's Club)

Forbes, *Essays for Discussion* (Harper and Brothers)

Hudson, *Green Mansions* (Grosset and Dunlap)

Lieberman, *Poems for Enjoyment* (Harper and Brothers)

Neihardt, *Song of the Indian Wars* (The Macmillan Company)

Pan-American Writers (various titles in translation)

Schweikert, et al., *Adventures in American Literature* (Harcourt, Brace and Company)

Shakespeare, *As You Like It* (The Macmillan Company)

Stern, *Pocket Book of America* (Pocket Books, Inc.)

Strachey, *Queen Victoria* (Harcourt, Brace and Company)

Watson and Pressey, *Contemporary Drama, American Plays I* (Charles Scribner's Sons)

Watson and Pressey, *Contemporary Drama, European Plays II* (Charles Scribner's Sons)

Wood, Husband, and Bacon, *Fact and Opinion* (D. C. Heath and Company)

The pupil-owned text in literature, a collection of material by American authors, serves not only its obvious purpose of familiarizing the pupil with the best in American literature, but because of its presentation by types serves also as a core for the 3 English course, providing an approach to the major pieces of literature studied.

Having studied short stories in the freshman and sophomore years, the pupil starts with the familiar, a group of short stories, but now the emphasis is on the relation of characters, setting, and plot. Transition to the longer prose forms is provided by a chapter from *Moby Dick* which, while it has a unity of its own, provides details of characterization and background necessary to the development of the long plot, and by *The Voice of Bugle Ann*, a novelette.

Silas Marner, with its sound psychology and comprehensive observation of human nature, is studied as an example of the realistic novel. In discovering the interplay between character and situation and the importance of character as a determining force, the pupil begins to lay a basis for understanding and tolerance; in his dealings with people he is more likely to seek to understand, even though he may not approve, another person's conduct. The next step, of course, is to become more critical of his own motives and their sources. Another principal value in the study of this novel lies in recognizing ideas demonstrated in the story and in relating them to one's own experience and observation. This is the basis for enjoyment on the part of any thoughtful adult reader, and the older pupil should now be able to recognize this as important. *Silas Marner* is sufficiently difficult and detailed to require approximately three weeks' study. Assignments for the first reading should not be too long; class discussion should be such as to insure complete understanding of the developments in each day's assignments. Then a series of general assignments should lead to a discussion of the kind of characters, setting, plot, motivation, purpose, and style that are typical of the realistic novel.

It is important for the older pupil to know that novels differ in purpose and in construction; otherwise he is impatient with the novel that is not exactly like all the other novels he has read. He should be interested now in knowing what an author is trying to do and how he does it.

Green Mansions, the romantic novel, needs some introduction so that the pupil will know what to expect, but once he gets started he will read rapidly and can complete the novel in five assignments. He sees now the extent to which characters and incidents

are subordinated to setting and recognizes the use of color words and figures of speech in achieving vivid description. Then the procedure is repeated: What can be said of the characters, setting, plot, motivation, purpose, and style of the romantic novel?

Some teachers may wish to make use of optional material to introduce the satirical novel as another type of reading experience.

Biography. — Just as the author of a realistic novel endows a character with certain inherent qualities and shows the development of that character through various experiences and associations, so does the biographer make a real person understandable. Strachey's *Queen Victoria* may be used to clinch all that has been said about characterization and motivation in the realistic novel. The use of vivid incident to establish traits of character, the well-defined pattern of Victoria's likes and dislikes, the persistence of childhood traits throughout a long lifetime, the blend of pathos, humor, and irony resulting from failure to understand one's self and to assimilate experience make this book valuable.

The value of the student-owned text in American literature for providing continuity is once more apparent in the examples of historical narration and dramatic narrative. Excerpts from Carl Sandburg's *Abraham Lincoln* contain some of the incidents utilized by Robert Sherwood in *Abe Lincoln in Illinois*, which is studied in its entirety. Having seen how a biographer presents a character, the pupil probably now has his first experience in seeing how a dramatist interweaves the exposition of character with the presentation of dramatic incidents.

Drama. — The pupil is now ready for a detailed study of drama, which is one of the literary types stressed in the second semester. Having read a Shakespearean play in each of the two preceding years, the pupil should not have too much difficulty in following the plot of *Macbeth*. Macbeth is seen to have certain admirable qualities and a capacity for greatness; he comes to his downfall because of a character flaw, his "vaulting ambition." Macbeth submits to a temptation which all students can recognize as their own in a lesser degree. Through most of the play Macbeth holds the sympathy of the reader, a sympathy based on understanding though not on approval; he ultimately sees Macbeth's tragic situation clearly in contrast with what he might have been. Again the emphasis is on character as the determining factor in a person's action, regardless of how strong external circumstances may be. Paraphrasing, identification of key speeches, and some

memorizing are desirable. A minimum of three weeks is recommended for the intensive study of this play, with perhaps an additional week if the Orson Welles records and script books are used. A principal value here is in showing how characterization is sometimes weakened by cutting and arranging.

On the theory that anything is better understood by contrast, some teachers follow the study of *Macbeth* with the study of one of Shakespeare's comedies. One possibility is *Twelfth Night*, for which the Orson Welles records and script books are available. A week is ample for this play, with much of the class time spent in pointing out differences between the structure of comedy and tragedy and in analyzing devices for comedy. Pupils are always amazed that no one has thought up any new ones since Shakespeare's time.

Optional material includes such plays as *Cyrano de Bergerac*, *The Emperor Jones*, *The Silver Cord*, and *The Beggar on Horseback* for those classes which wish to devote more time to drama.

Poetry. — The text in American literature contains a unit on reading lyric poetry and one on reading narrative poetry. The latter is especially useful as an approach to *John Brown's Body*. Here the pupil finds a combination of historical narration, biography, and fiction—all presented with the poet's artistry. Here again he finds the Lincoln of Sandburg and of Robert Sherwood, along with other historical characters such as John Brown, Jefferson Davis, and Robert E. Lee. Here, too, he finds the little people, the fictional characters to whom Benet says "nothing happens . . . that did not happen or could not have happened to real people who lived in that time." All are caught up in the tragedy and confusion of war, a war of which Benet tells both sides with understanding and fairness, but the emphasis is still on character. What happens to all the little people swept along by that vast external circumstance called war? What of all the individual conflicts that are woven into the larger conflicts? Three weeks are allotted for the study of this book with much of the class time devoted to oral reading. Reading aloud is essential for the study of poetry. Unless the pupil hears as he sees, he misses much of the meaning and almost all that distinguishes poetry from prose. Only thus will he appreciate the use of various meters for the various characters and types of incidents.

Extensive Reading. — *Books for You* can be used not only as a guide to reading but also as a record of reading. Since for most readers the novel is the most popular form, perhaps the most

opportune time to launch the extensive reading program is immediately following the novel unit. Whether oral or written, the book report should now stress understanding of the author's purpose and significant ideas rather than confining itself to a mere summary of the narrative. The extensive reading program throughout the year may parallel literary types read intensively, or it may be organized by units suited to the group or the individual. The use of magazines such as *Coronet* and *Reader's Digest* is optional. This year the latter was available in class-size sets. Certainly some material which helps a group to be current in its reading is desirable.

Composition. — The equivalent of five weeks in each semester is devoted to the pupil-owned composition text and to oral and written composition, but review and re-teaching of grammar, punctuation, spelling, and sentence structure must be almost continuous. It is important now that the pupil be held responsible for what he has been taught in the two preceding years. Errors which were before perhaps not too serious now become conspicuous. The obvious aim in teaching grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure is to help the pupil say exactly what he means. Knowing how and why a sentence is right or wrong is far more helpful than knowing merely that it is right or wrong. The *how* and *why* are learned in mechanics as organization and evaluation of ideas are learned in composition. Progression in the use of personal incident as subject matter is possible if emphasis is placed upon parallelism between what the pupil reads and what he knows from his own experience and observation. Expository material in the literature text combines well with a unit in the composition text on straight thinking and selection of ideas. The pupil's purpose in reading such material is to find out what the author thinks and why he thinks as he does; his purpose in writing, to express clearly a point of view and to support it logically.

Library Project. — On recommendation of the Basic Study Skills Committee a library project was introduced in 1947 "to involve the pupil's study and use of the mechanics of bibliography, note taking, documentation, analysis and synthesis of materials." A week either near the end of the first semester or early in the second semester is scheduled for the teacher, with at least one day to be spent in the library. It is recommended that the project be related, if possible, to the study of American literature. A statement of the project must be approved by the head of the department. Time of completion and length of the project are left to the discretion of the teacher.

4 ENGLISH

Texts purchased by pupils:

Inglis et al., *Adventures in English Literature, Revised Edition* (Harcourt, Brace and Company)

Leonard and Salisbury, *Language for Use* (Scott, Foresman, and Company)

4 English S pupils use Hodge, *Harbrace Handbook*, Harcourt, Brace Company; 4 English H pupils use Wood, Carpenter and Colburn, *The Right Way With Words*, Book 6, Henry Holt Co., in place of *Language for Use*.

Texts available for circulation in sets from the Book Room:

Assigned, in first semester: Reppert, *Modern Short Stories* (McGraw-Hill Book Company)

Assigned, in second semester: Lin Yutang, *Moment in Peking* (John Day)

Optional:

Addison, *Sir Roger de Coverley Papers* (American Book Company)

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight (mimeographed)

Barrie, *The Admirable Crichton* (Charles Scribner's Sons)

Boas and Hahn, *Social Backgrounds of English Literature* (Little, Brown and Company)

Cunningham, *Understanding America* (Harcourt, Brace and Company)

Hart, Perry, and Moffet, *Representative Short Stories* (The Macmillan Company)

Shakespeare, *Taming of the Shrew* (Row, Peterson and Company)

Stewart, *Storm* (Penguin Books, Inc.)

Watson and Pressey, *Contemporary Drama, English and Irish Plays I and II; European Plays I* (Charles Scribner's Sons)

Purposes of Literary Study in 4 English. — In the English course, literature is viewed as a panorama of life, stripped of the sometimes meaningless aims of a course of study. The purpose is only to look at life more clearly, more correctly, more understandingly, and with greater sympathy. Such a simple aim includes the power to distinguish between reason and emotion, sentiment and sentimentality, romance and realism, generalities and definiteness.

Short Stories. — The short story is of value as an introduction to literature because the pupil is already acquainted with the type both through his casual reading of magazines and his intensive reading of short stories during earlier high-school years. In the senior year, stories are selected that reflect experiences of teen-age youth, and the discussion centers around these points: the problem, its possible solutions, and the emotional quality in the character that makes the outcome what it is. For instance,

many of the stories in the text give the pupil a chance to watch a character acting against his own advantage and to consider the causes of such action. A literary device such as this strengthens the understanding of a moral principle as no other subject is able to do.

Novel. — The aim in passing from the familiar personal experience of the short story to the unfamiliar in the novels of other countries is to transfer the center of interest from the personal to a perception of problems of a different nature confronting people in other parts of the world. Since *Moment in Peking* by Lin Yutang was adopted as part of the course during the war period, in order to familiarize the pupil with customs different from his own, attention is directed also to other novels depicting the mores of various peoples. The social studies supply a frame of reference for this extension into the social life of less familiar backgrounds. But in no way can the social science frame of study approximate the experience of literature. Literature begins when the dramatic experience of the people in the novel becomes the real experience of the pupil.

A list of novels and other books for this study follows:

Austen, Jane	Emma
	Persuasion
Benedict, Ruth	The Chrysanthemum and the Sword
Bojer, Johann	The Great Hunger
	The New Temple
Buck, Pearl	The Good Earth
Currie, Eve	Journey Among Warriors
Dodd, Martha	Through Embassy Eyes
Dostoevski, Fedor	Crime and Punishment
Forster, E. M.	Passage to India
Fast, Howard	Citizen Tom Paine
Gulbrandsen, Trygve	Beyond Sing the Woods
	The Wind from the Mountain
Keith, Agnes Newton	Land Below the Wind
Marquand, John P.	The Late George Apley
Munthe, Axel	Story of San Michele
Pyle, Ernie	Brave Men
Reade, Charles	The Cloister and the Hearth
Severaid, Eric	Not So Wild a Dream
Shridharami, R. J.	My India, My America
Thackeray, William	Vanity Fair
Tolstoi, Leo	War and Peace
White, T. H. and Jacoby	Thunder Out of China

Poetry. — The vividness of experience of the short story is used as an impetus for the approach to poetry through narrative and dramatic poems, such as Benet, "Western Star"; Browning,

"Pippa Passes"; Masefield, "Reynard and the Fox"; LaFarge, "Each to the Other"; MacLeish, "Conquistador"; Neihardt, "Song of Hugh Glass," "Song of Three Friends," "Song of the Indian Wars"; Robinson, "Amaranth," "Man Against the Sky," "Tristram"; Rodman, "The Airmen"; Scott, "The Lady of the Lake"; Tennyson, "The Princess."

Because poetry differs from prose in revealing this vividness of experience, the study of the narrative poem is a wedge into the area of the synthetic language of poetry. To connect the vividness of experience of the narrative with the vividness of feeling in the lyric, the sonnet is the most natural form to study next. Longer lyrics like "L'Allegro" and "Il Penseroso," "Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey," and "Ode to a Nightingale," prolong the vividness of emotional experience through detailed pictures, enhanced by rhythm, tone, and suggestiveness. Figurative language is one of the most valuable means of attaining the synthetic quality of poetry. The student-owned text in English literature supplies selections for intensive study of these kinds of poetry.

Hamlet. — Plays, especially those in poetic form, are the most difficult form of reading for high school pupils. The absence of any explanation leaves him to imagine the omitted description or analysis or discussion. In the play the dialog is everything. The impact of the incident, the character, and the setting is something of a jolt to the mind that expects the words to do all, for the mind must be very active in evoking what the narrator in a novel or short story supplies. A character in action is the basis of drama, and characters in life and consequently on the printed page show up best in complicated situations. The complication may vary — sometimes the clash is between the individual and other individuals; sometimes, with his environment; sometimes with himself; again, a rare play contains all of these as does *Hamlet*.

Hamlet is young, at the peak of youth's idealism, when abruptly he is faced with a practical problem for which neither his mental nor his moral training equips him.

To see a potentially great person suffer mental and emotional pain is to see tragedy. To read about such an experience is to open to the pupil's mind the possibility of being confronted with some situation with which he is entirely unfitted to cope. Because of this experience in entering into another's personality, the pupil's imagination is stimulated to consider other plays which are entirely new to his experience; and, consequently, the theater becomes a reality rather than merely an entertainment.

Essays. — The essay affords the pupil an opportunity to express his own viewpoints and observations as a result of his own experience and reading. In the essay, perhaps more than in any other form of writing, clever turns of expression, pointed figures of speech, fresh viewpoints of overworked subjects, and mechanics in language — all now become valuable assets to him in conveying his own ideas to a listening audience. Again the text offers a wide range of suggestive material for this study.

Grammar. — Grammar for the senior year reviews the common errors in daily communication; for instance, distinctions in the use of the verbs *lie* and *lay* and other irregular verbs; agreement in number of subject and verb and in pronoun and antecedent; discrimination between the preposition and the conjunction, as in *like* and *as*; the element of time relations through tense, and the change of verb to denote contrary-to-fact statement.

The senior year should stress application of mechanical knowledge of grammar to thought content. Emphasis, therefore, should be upon effective expression through parallelism, subordination, and coordination. It is only through the constant repetition of exercises in writing sentences illustrative of these structures that the pupil finally comprehends the more subtle relationships of thought.

For developing a subject, the first natural procedure is to write down ideas, both relevant and irrelevant, that come to mind. The next step is to leave out the wholly irrelevant and rearrange the relevant in the most effective order.

Smooth transition from sentence to sentence and paragraph to paragraph is the next aim. A study of transitional phrases and effective devices for summarizing and directing thought relations aids in bringing the ideas to a focus. Practice is provided in omitting unnecessary and redundant expressions.

Vocabulary. — For seniors, a vocabulary study including the denotative as well as the connotative meaning of words is most important.

SPECIAL COURSES

Grouping according to interest and ability. — In addition to the regular four-year course of study, a special four-year course is provided for pupils who show little aptitude in language and who do not plan to continue their education beyond the twelfth grade.

In the eleventh and twelfth grades, special interests and special ability are the basis for further grouping of pupils. Juniors in-

interested in drama may enroll in 3 English Drama; juniors interested in writing and the publications may enroll in 3 English Journalism. Seniors interested in public speaking may elect 4 English Speech. Any junior or senior who had an average of 4 or better in the previous year's English may choose one of these special interest classes instead of the regular course.

On the basis of special ability, pupils with a mark of 2 or 1 in 3 English are assigned to 4 English Honors.

Special-Interest Courses

3 English J. — Upon completing 2 English with a grade of 4 or better and receiving the recommendation of his sophomore teacher and the approval of the 3 English J instructor, a student may elect 3 English J instead of the regular English course. 3 English J aims to accomplish the following objectives:

(1) *Development of a more fluent, forceful style in objective writing.* Newswriting of all types is taught. The study culminates in preparation of a comprehensive investigative paper by means of which there are stressed the techniques of using advanced reference books in the library, preparing notecards, compiling a bibliography, and annotating source material properly. Topics suitable for magazine articles are chosen for investigation.

(2) *Accomplishment of a reasonable degree of correctness in the mechanics of grammar, punctuation, and spelling, and the accurate presentation of facts obtained from interviews.* Grammar and punctuation are reviewed by formal drill. Thorndike's scientific spelling list must be mastered. Since writers believe that there is no good writing, only good rewriting, every paper must be rewritten to the satisfaction of the instructor. Every known technique to develop accuracy in note-taking and in the preparation of *facts as facts* is stressed.

(3) *Development of discrimination in the art of reading a daily newspaper intelligently and realization of the social and vocational aspects of journalism.* With approximately 146,000,000 papers read every day, more papers than there are loaves of bread baked daily, the newspaper is the most widely read and probably the most influential medium affecting public opinion. Because of these facts, training is needed to develop more skill in reading newspapers. The part which the press and radio have played and are playing is studied and discussed.

Although the course is not meant to be vocational, the numerous opportunities in journalism are explored. Students do voca-

tional reading, go on field trips, and hear speakers at the meetings of the Chicago Scholastic Press Guild.

(4) *An understanding and appreciation of the major literary works studied in the junior year.* These include *Silas Marner*, *The Last Frontier*, *Macbeth*, and *John Brown's Body*. Although the major emphasis in this course is on writing techniques, literature is not neglected. Students have a planned reading program of ten books, chosen according to the student's needs, interests, and desires, for the year's course. Students planning to take College Board Examinations have a slightly different reading list from those not planning to take the examinations.

(5) *The development of ability and responsibility to work successfully in the publication of The Evanstonian, the laboratory project of the 3 English J classes and the high school's weekly paper.* The school paper is written by members of the 3 English J classes under the supervision of a group of senior editors, students who have completed the year course. The success of this project is evident from the many national awards the paper has received.

3 English D. — Juniors especially interested in the study of drama may elect this course to replace regular 3 English. In addition to covering the literature and reviewing the communication skills required of all juniors, the course gives students an opportunity to participate actively in various phases of dramatic work. Wherever possible, the drama study is correlated closely with the year's work in literature. Careful study of the contemporary scene in the theater acquaints students with the outstanding personalities — actors, actresses, playwrights, scene designers, directors, and producers — who are responsible for the production of professional plays. Theater parties are organized to attend the better productions which appear in Chicago.

An extensive unit in bodily action is presented to aid the prospective actor in learning the elements of good posture, both standing and sitting, along with walk and gesture and the parts that these play in the creation of an effective stage characterization.

Another important unit studied is voice and diction. Voices are recorded, an analysis is made of each student's particular speech habits, and corrective exercises are given for the improvement and development of an effective speaking voice. Closely correlated with the work in voice and diction is the oral interpretation of the printed page, so that students will learn to read both prose and poetry aloud effectively. After mastering the fundamentals of using the voice and body, the students receive detailed

training in acting technique, in presenting characterization studies from plays, in writing and bringing to life on the stage original character sketches, and in acting short scenes from outstanding classical and modern plays.

All students are cast in one-act plays, which are carefully rehearsed and presented as the final project of the year's study. Casts of many of the lunch-hour theater shows and home-room skits are chosen from juniors enrolled in 3 English D, and the major drama productions are always studded with the names of students receiving training in this course.

Stagecraft. — For students especially interested in the technical aspects of the theater — scenery, lighting, properties, make-up, and costumes — a course in stagecraft is offered to both boys and girls. By extensive practical experience gained in class laboratory periods and on crews, students acquire proficiency in the backstage activities connected with producing a play successfully. Stagecraft students plan and prepare all the scenery, properties, lights, and make-up for the lunch-hour theater productions and work actively in preparation for the highlights of the season's calendar, the major productions. Occasionally, gifted students design completely the settings used for school productions.

4 English Speech. — The elective course in speech for seniors is intended not just for those who have ability to speak but for those who would like to acquire such ability. Half the time is spent on speech work, the other half on the study of literature, the mechanics of the language, writing, and other work.

The chief objective is to enable students to talk clearly, fluently, intelligently, and purposefully. There is much informal discussion in large and small groups, and prepared speeches of many kinds are regular assignments. To develop readiness, orderliness of thought, adaptability, and eventually ease and confidence in meeting unexpected situations, there is much practice in impromptu speaking. Later, the class is divided into teams for debating. Preparation involves research, note-taking, brief-making, study of issues and cooperative planning.

Attention is given to the processes of coherent, methodical reasoning, to the nature of evidence and of proof, to inductive and deductive thinking, to the practical application of syllogistic reasoning, and to the detection of fallacies. This study develops alert listeners, critical readers, and deliberate speakers.

Reading for the course includes study of an anthology of masterpieces of English poetry and prose; *Hamlet* and some selected modern plays; at least three hundred pages of the world's

greatest orations; and free reading from a long list of literary works of many types.

Written work stresses the writing of précis and summaries, outlining, note-taking, drafting and revising original speeches, and three-page book reports.

In a study of the origin and development of the English language, the student is given some experience in linguistics and phonetics, idioms, word origins, figures of speech, and devices for vocabulary building.

Parliamentary practice is taught; students learn to conduct meetings in an orderly manner. They learn the types of motions and their proper use; ways of organizing groups, participating in discussions from the floor, and making committee reports; and all other matters pertaining to procedure in well-regulated business meetings.

Many requests are made for 4 English S students to address student audiences. There are also calls for student speakers to address service clubs and other organizations in the city. Students who accept such invitations are coached and privately rehearsed for the occasion. There are also opportunities for the annual oratorical contest sponsored by the American Legion.

4 English II. — An honors course for seniors was set up in September, 1946. The course is designed to enable students of superior attainments in English to do a more advanced type of work than the regular classes and to proceed at a more rapid rate. Seniors with a mark of 1 or 2 are assigned to the class automatically, as are those with a mark of 3 if they intend to take College Board Examinations. Others with a mark of 3 may enroll if they present to the chairman of the department satisfactory evidence of ability in creative writing.

Major emphasis is on the study of language as a tool, and for that reason attention centers chiefly upon expository and practical types of writing. Opportunity is given, however, for writing stories, essays, and poetry, and students have scored marked successes in various writing contests. The only pupil purchased text is the Wood, Carpenter, and Colburn, *The Right Way With Words*, Book Six.

For the study of language as a tool, some knowledge of semantics is essential. Such study improves the quality of reading, listening, speaking, and writing. The basis of this introductory study of semantics is Hayakawa's *Language in Action*. By reminding students of the difference between words and things, by making them aware of the processes of slanting and balancing,

by giving them some control over the use of generalizations, and by stressing the importance of context in interpretation, this study provides the necessary basis for a course that permits free consideration of current issues and strives to integrate literature with life as students know it. For instance, the reading of Hersey's *Hiroshima* opened the year's work.

The writing of a long reference paper is the culminating work in composition. Here subjects are chosen from recent events that provide background for present-day issues, living authors or important classical authors for biographical or critical treatment, and special interests stimulated by class discussions. The classes learn to use the full resource of the library in making a bibliography, experiment with various methods of note-taking, and gain the valuable experience of sifting a complex and extensive body of information and organizing it into a well-documented and readable article.

In mechanics, the emphasis is chiefly upon improvement of the sentence structure and upon overcoming individual shortcomings in spelling and punctuation. Vocabulary development receives much attention, not less to increasing precision and flexibility of the vocabulary already half mastered than to increasing the total vocabulary.

Study of *Hamlet* and *Henry V* was dictated by the presentation in Chicago of Maurice Evans' *G.I. Hamlet* and the British technicolor film of *Henry V*, for both of which the classes organized theater parties. Outside reading of at least ten books of various types is a requirement, and on most of these books the students give oral book talks or write reviews. Collections of modern short stories, poetry, and essays, and some use of an anthology of English classics give balance to the study of literature. Subscription to the *Atlantic Monthly* and use of *Scholastic*, *Coronet*, and other magazines introduce current writers, contribute ideas and personalities for discussion, and provide a stimulus for contest writing.

Special Ability Courses

Opportunity (X) Course. — English X is a four-year opportunity course set up for pupils who plan for no formal education beyond high school and who have shown themselves unlikely to achieve success in college preparatory work because of distinct handicaps in language ability.

In the first and second years, English X has a double function: to give slow-learning pupils an opportunity to progress in

English at their own rate; to give faster-learning pupils a chance to overcome special weaknesses.

Because disability in reading is one of the most crippling weaknesses in all school work, chief emphasis in the first year is placed on improving reading skills. Objective tests given in December and repeated in a comparable form in May sometimes show a gain of as much as three years in comprehension or in vocabulary knowledge by a few individuals. Gains of one or two years are more common.

Freshmen who attain a grade level of 9.5 or better on their reading tests are recommended for transfer from English X to the regular course. Experience of many pupils over a period of fifteen years has demonstrated that the most satisfactory method of transferring is to take Remedial English in summer school following completion of 1 English X. Some pupils transfer by going to summer school after 2 English X. Occasionally a pupil is ready to transfer after a few months of English X. Such a pupil with extra study of 1 English grammar by himself and with after-school help from his teacher can usually bridge the gap between 1 English X and 1 English.

Credit in English X is sufficient for graduation from high school and for admission to various business colleges, art schools, and trade schools; it is not, however, accepted for entrance credit by liberal arts colleges and universities. Whenever a pupil carries successfully a year's work in regular English after transfer from English X, his credits for previous courses in English X are converted into college preparatory English credit.

Training to improve reading skill continues through 2 English X. There, however, more time is allotted to the study of grammar and composition than in the first year. A grammar text is chosen for its adaptability to the slow-learning and reluctant grammarians who dominate 2 English X classes. The composition textbook used by the regular 1 English classes is used also by 2 English X pupils. Assignments in written composition are planned to create in the pupil a desire to express himself as well as to develop the skill with which to do so. Continuous practice is given in oral expression with these objectives: ability to speak to a group and be understood, appreciation of the opinion of the other person, enjoyment of participation.

Reading materials suited to the interests of pupils in the ninth and tenth grades but requiring reading ability as low as fourth to sixth grade are now available. Boys and girls who never before voluntarily finished a book read three or four. With their interest awakened by this first experience of rapid, pleasurable reading,

they more willingly undertake a conscious effort to improve their reading skill through the use of books planned for that purpose.

Books for the rest of the course are chosen in the same way: study-type readers for conscious improvement and fiction for rapid reading. The plays, novels, and short stories chosen for the latter purpose are at progressively higher levels of difficulty.

The third and fourth years of English X aim to help the pupils who are not going to college meet problems that immediately confront them after completion of high school. Although it would be impossible to list every topic that comes to the attention of these classes, some which receive careful consideration are consumer education, jobs, personality adjustment, hobbies and recreation, health, propaganda analysis, the handling of money, and local, national, and international affairs.

The courses are planned to encourage wide, interesting, and functional reading. The pupils are given pleasant and profitable reading experiences, chiefly about adult-life situations. They are helped to discover the continuity of the daily events recorded in newspapers and magazines, with such excursions into the past as are necessary to understand the present.

The handicaps of these pupils are such that persistent individual instruction is imperative for continued improvement in the basic skills of oral and written expression. Stress upon mechanics, however, is not so much upon the conventional type of drill as upon functioning power to read, speak, and write.

Thus the general objectives for the last two years of English X are: to help each pupil, according to his ability, to reach his maximum skill in reading, in listening, and in oral and written expression; to raise each pupil's reading tastes; to give wide experience in the utility values of reading; to develop audience functions; to make all writing activities functional; to choose reading materials for a definite service to the pupils rather than to give them conventional literary knowledge. The teacher makes every effort to define the activities of the class in relation to the personnel.

Necessarily the materials used in these courses are variable. A partial list follows:

Practical English Magazine

Junior Red Cross Journal

Short stories (various collections)

Consumer Education Series (pamphlets)

O'Rourke, *Self-Aids in English Usage*

Current magazines and newspapers

Novels, both classical and modern.

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